

Smart Zone Shared Prosperity

A Request for Expansion of House Bill #5609

Karen F. Dunigan
Jackson Citizens for Economic Growth
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Smart Zone/Shared Prosperity Testimony

Thank you, Committee Chairman Miesner and Committee Members, for this opportunity to address you about House Bill #5609.

In the last couple of years the State of Michigan has suffered rough economic conditions and some communities have been destroyed and I believe that the citizens of the State of Michigan have reached a point in our history, that we can embrace the challenges, changes and look forward to a future of rich rewards. Working together I believe that we can take full advantage of the opportunities as they present themselves and reap the benefits of Shared Prosperity.

The citizens of Michigan are innovative and the entrepreneurial spirit is still vital and alive and we have to build on that spirit. New ideas will move our economy forward and that is why we are asking that you consider passage of House Bill #5609 to allow 3 more Smart Zones, so that other communities in the State of Michigan can be economic engines for job growth and economic development and to afford an environment where the innovators and entrepreneurs can build their facilities to enrich the spirit and self esteem of their communities.

The state plays a key role in developing a healthy economy and we realize that the state cannot do it alone however, by the building of partnerships

with local governments, the private sector, economic development agencies and the educational system we can build the components to a successful economy and shared prosperity.

Why open up Smart Zone legislation?

1. When a community receives the “Smart Zone” designation, the very word “smart” affords the community, self-esteem and pride in their community and a new lease on economic prosperity, because they believe in themselves and feel that they are capable of great success.
2. Strategic investment in the communities infrastructure – so that there will be a supply of project ready industrial, commercial and residential land, be it water, sewer, transportation or telecommunications.
3. Increased tax revenues. We are all aware that the toolboxes for economic development are shrinking from both state and federal funds.
4. We all understand that our future economic growth in Michigan depends on one thing – the ability to create the best educated, skilled and trained workforce in the country. That should be and will be the State of Michigan’s advantage in the country’s and the global marketplace. We all are aware of the quality of our education system and the impact that it has on economic

development and we have to become the leaders in education development. When our education system succeeds – economic development succeeds. Education is an enterprise and with economic success comes increased revenues so that we can concentrate on that the maximum tax dollars are spent in the classroom where they can make the biggest difference.

5. A Smart Zone designation allows existing businesses to expand and will draw new businesses to Michigan
6. A Smart Zone designation will bring high paying; high tech jobs to the community and will encourage our young people to stay in Michigan and to develop careers. It is all about our children's future and it is vital that we have a healthy growing economy which means more jobs and when more citizens are at work, the government has revenue to provide for services, crime decreases and the demand for social services decline, that means that we all have the resources to invest in our economic futures.
7. Smart Zones have already been successful in terms in sparking high tech investments; by establishing more of them we can level the playing field and send the message that we have the resources necessary to effectively compete nationally and globally.

Communities grow and change, the citizens adapt and life goes on. Usually we are unaware of the significance of the changes, however, in this new era

we are very aware of the changes that occur around us. Michigan is a state with a rich business history and its citizens have proven over the years their ability to grasp new ideas and technology and to take advantage of opportunities and react positively to growth and change. We are asking for your help to embrace this “shared prosperity” and to pass House Bill #5609 to allow for three additional Smart Zones.

Thank you.